



**OFFICE OF THE  
MAYOR  
VAUGHN D. SPENCER**

## **CITY OF READING, PENNSYLVANIA**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

## **MAYOR AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE GET TOUGH ON ILLEGAL RENTAL PROPERTIES**

Reading Mayor Vaughn Spencer and Property Maintenance Division Manager Ron Natale held a joint News Conference today outside 421 S. 9<sup>th</sup> street after a placard had been placed on the property to deem it an illegal rental property under the City's new housing ordinance, 52-2011, which took effect on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Joining them was City Councilwoman Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, who's Council District the property is in. The owner of the property is listed in City records as living in New York. The S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street property was the third and final illegal rental property to receive a placard today, the first day of the new ordinance enforcement.

"The position of my administration and of City Council is we're not going to tolerate this," Mayor Spencer said. "The days of illegal rentals in our city are over. We're going to start coming after them, take aggressive action, and we're going to start enforcing the law. It's a matter of public safety. These residents deserve to be safe, and I'm responsible for the well-being of the residents of this City," he added.

The new ordinance contains a fine of \$1,000 per unit if the property is determined to be illegal, and an additional fine of \$300 per unit per month will be added if the fine is not paid within 15 days after a property owner is cited. There is a power point presentation on the city's web site under the codes page that a property owner can utilize to make their rental property legal if it is not. "There are a small number of people that just try to stay away and duck the system. The penalties are there to get them to come in voluntarily rather than have us chase them down. This is all about just making the neighborhoods safe," said Ron Natale, Property Maintenance Division Manager.

"There are many who have been victims of their landlords not maintaining their properties properly. They feel in jeopardy in the properties they live, they're children are at risk, so they're grateful, as tenants, that the City is doing this. This really is the right thing to do, and I'm glad the Mayor is taking a strong stand on this," added Councilwoman Goodman-Hinnershitz.

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